

DRAMATICS

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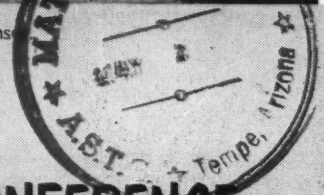
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CONTENTS

ARTICLE

Try a 'Resident Playwright' by Anne Shannon 18

FEATURES

As I See It 6
Regional Conferences — 1958 6
In This Issue 7
Pictorial Preview: Seventh National Dramatic Arts Conference 8
Before the Play by Jeanne Deschamps 26
Index to Volume XXIX, 1957-58 31

SERIES

The Great Elizabeth by Charles R. Trumbo and Pollyann 19
Let's Have a Readers' Theater by Leslie Irene Coger 20
American Musical Theater: Production Problems by Delwin B. Dusenbury .. 21

DEPARTMENTS

Theater for Children by Frieda E. Reed 22
Plays of the Month by Earl W. Blank 24
Brief Views by Willard Friederich 32

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As I See It . . .

HOW WIDE IS YOUR WORLD?

EVEN THOUGH there are suggested summer vacations to Europe, Canada, Mexico, South America, and even a tour of the world in our Sunday newspaper supplements, and invitations in almost every mail to travel to the seashore resorts, lake regions, and mountain areas of our own country, I doubt very much if many of us will take advantage of these vacation offerings because we have become too self-centered and, I am afraid, too indolent to stir from our comfortable home environments. To those who never passed through "the looking glass" the world is indeed narrow, bound only by community and state borders.

Having traveled all over our country during the past eight years and to Europe, I now realize how narrow my own world was for many years, how much I missed by being a homebody. Flying over the ocean to Paris, France, in the springtime, over the Grand Canyon, over the Gold Coast of Florida, through the fog into Seattle, Los Angeles, Chicago, is indescribable by mere words. The majestic beauty of our own country is awe-inspiring and a revelation of the wondrous power and glory of our Creator.

Another summer vacation lies ahead. Travel the airways, ride the rails, or more leisurely loiter on the many superb highways to far distant cities, mountains, seashores, or lakes. The ocean is warm in Florida in the good old summertime, the famous boardwalk of Atlantic City is one of America's Seven Wonders, the seafood in Boston is a gourmet's delight, a cruise on the Great Lakes is a joy incomparable, the excitement of Las Vegas is unparalleled, the beauty of Los Angeles, Seattle, Portland is unsurpassed, and the wonderlands of our northern lake states are sights to behold. Even New York City with its Broadway can be delightful during the summertime.

Even theater becomes more glamorous during the summer months. There are Shakespearean Festivals in New England and Portland, summer opera in Cincinnati, musical comedies in St. Louis, and pageants in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, and the Black Hills of South Dakota. Tent theaters with their summer stock are booming. And there are the long-standing summer theaters everywhere—in the mountains, on the beaches, throughout the Great Plains. And finally summer theater schools are as near to you as you wish them to be.

Yes, vacation time is a dream come true. We in school work are indeed blessed as we have so much more vacation time than those in industry, offices, and stores. Summertime is Nature's one big show of the year. And it is a "hit" show!

How wide is your world? It is as wide or as narrow as you wish to make it. There is beauty everywhere, interesting people to meet, excitement and leisure beyond the looking glass. Step through to a wider world, let your long winter's dream come true, fly away on your "9th cloud."

THE "NATIONAL" OF THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY

THERE ARE two kinds of Thespian Troupes: the "stay-home" troupes and the "traveling" troupes. The first, possibly superior with their local theaters, never attend Thespian Regional Conferences and National Conferences. These troupes, although members of a national organization, have never learned the true meaning of the "national" in the National Thespian Society.

On the other hand, there are the travelling troupes—troupes that attend and participate in area, regional, and national conferences. These troupes know and understand national membership. Their members see other high school productions with only one aim: an evaluation of their own work. They meet students from not only their own and neighboring states, but also from all over the country.

Thespian Troupe 545, South Kitsap High School, Port Orchard, Washington, is a good example of a travelling troupe. Delegates of this troupe attended all the Northwestern Thespian Conferences at the University of Washington, Seattle, since their origin. More important its delegates with its sponsor, Doris Adley, traveled over 2400 miles, not once but six times to Indiana University, Bloomington, to attend all six of our national conferences—and delegates of this troupe with Miss Adley will be with us at Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, for our Seventh National Dramatic Arts Conference!

Which troupe are you—the stay-home or the travelling troupe? Do you know the true meaning of the word *national* of The National Thespian Society? Area and regional conferences are held annually in a number of our states, but more important now is our Seventh National Dramatic Arts Conference. A grand week of high school theater, sponsored by the University Theater at Purdue University and by The National Thespian Society is in the offing—the week of June 16. Join with nearly 1000 high school Thespians and their sponsors for an exciting vacation. How really national are our national Thespians? How wide is their world?

1958 — REGIONAL CONFERENCES — 1958

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OHIO (Northwest)	Memorial High School, St. Mary's, Lillian Codington, Sponsor, Troupe 629, Program Chairman; Florence E. Hill, Regional Director, Sponsor, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, October 18.
OHIO (Southeast)	Zanesville High School, Mrs. Arthur Bonifant, Sponsor, Troupe 563, Program Chairman; Florence E. Hill, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, October 4.
OHIO (Southwest)	New Woodward High School, Cincinnati, Ronald Aug, Sponsor, Troupe 437, Program Chairman; Florence E. Hill, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, October 11.
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THE FEATURE of this issue is the pictures of our student and adult participants of our forthcoming Seventh National Dramatic Arts Conference, which will be held on the beautiful campus of Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, the week of June 16. Casts of the one-act plays and full-length plays, personnel of workshops, readers, students who will offer the invocations, participants trying out for the variety show - all are included. Here is a pictorial advance program of "things that are to come."

It will be a grand week of high school theater which no student Thespian or Sponsor should miss. With an anticipated attendance of 1000 student delegates from an estimated 40 states, this conference will be one of the largest high school conferences held this year. This conference will officially open our celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the National Thespian Society - a celebration which will continue throughout the coming school year. So, it's on to Purdue in June.

ANNE SHANNON, Sponsor Troupe 1174, Highland High School, Albuquerque, New Mexico, is very fortunate in having in her city a playwright, Tom Erhard. Thus each year Miss Shannon and her troupe stage a premiere performance of Mr. Erhard's new, unpublished play. Were all of our sponsors so fortunate! Try a 'Resident Playwright' is the title of Miss Shannon's article.

WITH THIS issue we come again to the end of another school year. It has been a good year for DRAMATICS with its circulation averaging 30,000 each month and with advertising space "sold out" for each issue. As editor and business manager I am humbly grateful for the national acceptance of DRAMATICS.

TO DR. Delwin B. Dusenbury, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa., to Charles R. Trumbo, Regional Director of Central Florida and sponsor, Thespian Troupe 728, Bartow, Florida, and to Dr. Leslie Irene Coger, Professor of Speech and Dramatic Arts, Southwest Missouri State College, Springfield, Mo., authors of our three series of eight articles, I wish to recognize publicly their excellent literary contributions. All three series will be made into pamphlets this summer.

OUR DEPARTMENT editors, who have served so well, will be with us again next year. They are Frieda Reed, editor of Theater for Children; Dr. Earl Blank, editor of Plays of the Month; and Prof. Willard Friederich, editor of Brief Views.

AND SO we begin our search anew for interesting and inspiring articles for the coming year - more important than usual, for we shall be celebrating our 30th Anniversary of the founding of the National Thespian Society. We have already received a number of articles for consideration, made several assignments, and are alerted to several others. Our promise is to bring to both our students and adult readers the best in high school theater.

OUR NEXT ISSUE: OCTOBER

THEATRICAL GELATINE SHEETS

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JUNE 16 - 21

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LAFAYETTE, INDIANA



Willard Friederich, Head, Dept. of Speech and Drama, Marietta, Ohio, College, Assistant Conference Chairman.



Juanita Shearer, Indiana State Regional Director, Sponsor, Troupe 872, Brazil High School, Chairman of Banquet Committee and Sponsors' Teas.



Jean E. Donahey, Pennsylvania Regional Director, Sponsor, Troupe 187, Brownsville Sr. High School, Director of Workshop, **Problems of High School Dramatics.**



Mrs. Claire Nunn, Dayton, Ohio, Accompanist for Variety Show.



Frederick K. Miller, Montana State Regional Director, Sponsor, Troupe 555, Billings Sr. High School, Director of **Children's Theater Workshop.**



Alvin Cohen, Paramount Cosmetics, N. Y. C. Director of Workshop, **Make-Up for the Stage.**



Doris Marshall, National Director, Sponsor, Troupe 745, Helena, Montana, High School, Director of Workshop, **Advertising the Play.**



Mort L. Clark, Ass't. Prof. of Speech and Drama, State University, Alfred, New York, Director of Workshop, **Arena Staging.**

ONE-ACT PLAYS

and

WORKSHOP



Photo by Jerry Rose

The World of Sholom Aleichem, Troupe 391, Miami Beach, Fla., High School, Walter A. Peck, Sponsor.



Cutting from **Caesar and Cleopatra**, Troupe 102, Springfield, Mo., Central Sr. High School, Charles L. Jones, Sponsor.



A Young Lady of Property, Troupe 1020, Immaculata High School, Chicago, Ill., Anna Helen Reuter, Sponsor.



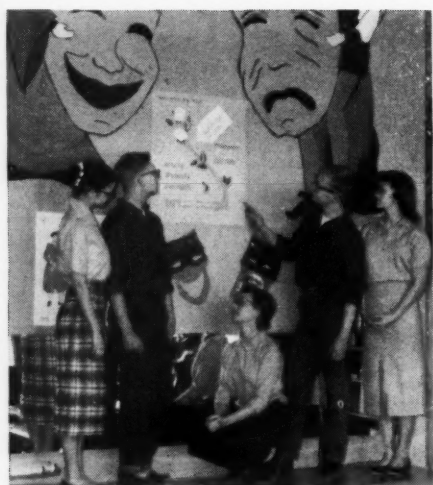
Op-O-Me-Thumb, Troupe 254, B. M. C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass., Barbara Wellington, Sponsor.



Cutting from **Dark of the Moon**, Troupe 570, William Fleming High School, Roanoke, Virginia, Genevieve Dickinson, Sponsor.



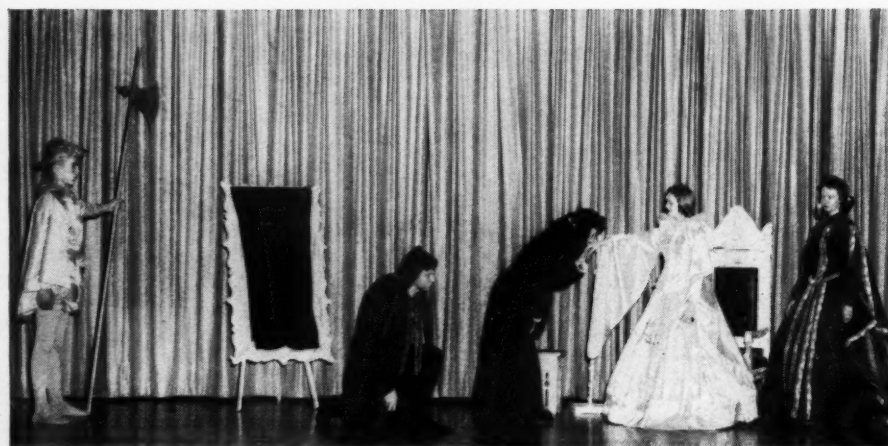
Cutting from **Roomful of Roses**, Troupe 153, Mirabeau B. Lamar High School, Houston, Texas, Ruth R. Denney, Sponsor.



Workshop, **Advertising the Play**, will be conducted by Troupe 745, Helena, Mont., High School, Doris Marshall, Sponsor.



The Scheming Lieutenant, Troupe 1240, Arsenal Technical High School, Indianapolis, Ind., Robert Maloy, Sponsor.



Birthday of the Infanta, Troupe 1487, Ellinwood, Kans., High School, B. Thomas Samples, Sponsor.

EVENING PERFORMANCES



The National Formal Thespian Initiation will be conducted by Troupe 545, South Kitsap High School, Port Orchard, Wash., Doris Adley, Sponsor.



Photo by McDaniel Studio

Antigone, featuring Reuben Setliff as Creon and Betty Hill as Antigone, will be presented by the drama department of Ouachita Baptist College, Arkadelphia, Arkansas, Dennis Holt, director.



William Cerone as Macbeth and Joyce Walberg as Lady Macbeth in a scene from **Macbeth**, to be presented by the State University of New York, Agricultural and Technical Institute at Alfred, New York, Mort Clark, Director.



Simple Simon, Troupe 555, Billings, Montana, Sr. High School, Fred K. Miller, Sponsor.

INVOCATIONS



Robert Dickeson, Troupe 1313, Van Horn High School, Kansas City, Mo. Invocation.



Mary Sue Staton, Troupe 24, Noblesville, Ind., High School. Invocation.



Larry Mullens, Troupe 115, Ceredo-Kenova High School, Kenova, W. Va. Invocation.

DRAMATIC READINGS



Diane Corenman, Troupe 59, Danville, Ill., High School. Reading: Cutting from **Dark Victory**.



David Minikel, Troupe 455, Benton Harbor, Mich., High School. Reading.



Diana Grafe, Troupe 118, St. Teresa Academy, E. St. Louis, Ill. Reading: "Recognition Scene from **Anastasia**."



James Jennings, Troupe 318, Dodge City, Kansas, Sr. High School. Reading.

TRY-OUTS FOR OUR THIRD NATIONAL VARIETY SHOW



Mike Mort, Kathie Trimble, Judy Lillehei, Larry Vandel, Troupe 545, South Kitsap High School, Port Orchard, Wash., Vocal Quartette.



Susan Shwely, Kay McKinney, Karen Dean, Troupe 1074, Mt. Whitney High School, Visalia, Calif., Japanese Dance.



Photo by Jerry Rose

Lynn Peal, Troupe 391, Miami Beach, Fla., Sr. High School, Song and Dance.



Marlene Lustik, Troupe 838, West Allis, Wisc., Central High School, Character Dance Solo.



Rocco De Francesco, Troupe 455, Benton Harbor, Mich., High School, Accordion Solo.



Bonnie Lou Thompson, Troupe 214, Carlisle, Pa., Sr. High School, Original Dance.



Julie Burke, Troupe 545, South Kitsap High School, Port Orchard, Wash., Mambo Toe Dance.



Jean Mudge, Sally Beresford, Troupe 59, Danville, Ill., High School, Soft Shoe Tap.



Joseph Bryant, Paula Edwards, Troupe 584, St. Joseph, Mich., High School, Comedy Skit.

VARIETY SHOW



Kathie Trimble, Larry Vandel,
Troupe 545, South Kitsap High
School, Port Orchard, Wash.,
Piano Duet.



Jacqueline Hash, Troupe
24, Noblesville, Indiana,
Sr. High School, Humorous
Monologue.



Helen Barker, Troupe 455, Benton
Harbor, Mich., High School,
Drum Majorette.



Photo by Ardmore Studio

Victor Taylor, Troupe 391, Miami Beach, Fla.,
Sr. High School, Dance Pantomime.



Mary Anne Enama, Troupe
118, St. Teresa Academy,
E. St. Louis, Ill., Humorous
Monologue.



Connie Alt, Troupe 584, St. Joseph,
Mich., High School, Tap Solo.



Molly Gehan, Troupe 214, Carlisle, Pa.,
Sr. High School, Original Pantomime.

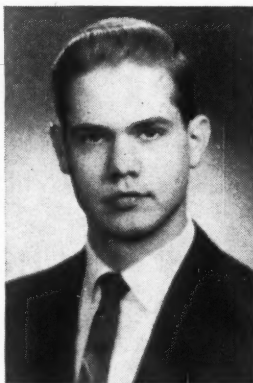


Larry Vandel, Troupe 545,
South Kitsap High School,
Port Orchard, Wash.,
Accordian Solo.

VARIETY SHOW



Ellen Bromley, Lowgene Bartram, Sharon
Shingleton, Judy Raffield, Troupe 115,
Ceredo-Kenova High School, Kenova,
W. Va., Comedy in Song.



Reed Stewart, Troupe 872,
Brazil, Ind., Sr. High
School, Vocal Solo.



Ken Elmendorf, Troupe 1502, North High
School, Evansville, Ind., Ventriloquist.



Jimmy Hopkins, Louanna Flynn, Jerry Hopkins, Troupe 745,
Helena, Mont., High School, Song and Dance.

INHERIT THE WIND

THE LARK

THE TEAHOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON

THE STARING MATCH

YOUR EVERY WISH

THAT'S MY COUSIN

BY HEX

A YOUNG LADY OF PROPERTY

THE DANCERS

**THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURES
DON QUIXOTE**

THE CURIOUS SAVAGE

MONEY MAD

MY SISTER EILEEN

GRAMERCY GHOST

I REMEMBER MAMA

JENNY KISSED ME

WHAT A LIFE

JUNIOR MISS

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TIME OUT FOR GINGER

RONALD ALEXANDER

One of the most popular comedies ever written. Applications for adjustment in the royalty for **TIME OUT FOR GINGER** are now being considered, in order to make the play available to those groups which felt they could not afford the fee required during the early period of its release.



Photo by Fred Fehl

Atkinson, in the N. Y. Times, said of **TIME OUT FOR GINGER** "a comedy that not only amuses but moves an audience is irresistible."

Hawkins, in the World-Telegram, wrote, "**TIME OUT FOR GINGER** is hilarious, all right, but it is also human, warm and touching. Draws as steady a stream of laughs as any comedy in years."

5 men (2 of these teen-age boys)

5 women (3 teen-age girls)

1 interior set

Books, \$1.00. Write for information as to royalty.

THE STORY, according to Kerr in the N. Y. Herald-Tribune, "starts us out with a fairly staid banker who needs some sort of creative release and finds it in lecturing to local high school classes on the need for self-fulfillment . . . It quickly develops however, that one of [the banker's] daughters — the youngest of three — has been very much impressed by her father's exhortations. She has further decided that her own true fulfillment can best be realized by going out for the football team." Any number of complications result: the father's job is jeopardized because the bank president doesn't approve; the girl's elder sisters insist that their social life has been blighted — especially the sister whose boy friend is captain of the football team; and the girl football player herself finds that playing football and being a girl aren't always compatible, particularly when her own boy friend disapproves of what she's doing. After any number of riotous mishaps, the play ends on a happily tender note with the whole family going out to see one of the other sisters in the high school play, Ginger escorted by her reconciled boy friend.

DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, Inc.

14 East 38th Street, New York 16, New York

TRY A 'RESIDENT PLAYWRIGHT'

By ANNE SHANNON

CURTAIN calls over for our spring play, both cast and backstage crew exulted. They had scored a triumph with a world premiere, *The High White Star*.

If you want a new experience for your Thespians, let your troupe serve as a production workshop for a new, unpublished play. If you can find an author to meet school dramatic needs, you'll have a challenge as stimulating as the latest Broadway venture.

Finding a playwright was a break for us. When Albuquerque's Highland High was new a few years ago, the young creative writing teacher, Tom Erhard, was immersed in teen-age life through his informal work with student publications. Close to the high school world, he expressed the desire one summer to start a novel about teen-agers.

"Write a play instead, and we'll stage it next year," I suggested.

"Are you serious?" he asked.

"Certainly," I replied with some misgivings as he exhibited a sudden glint in his eye.

When he brought his first full length manuscript into dramatics class that fall, it was obvious that our promise to stage his play had kindled a serious desire on his part to write good school drama.

This first play three years ago also served as a stepping stone for him into the spot of public relations director for a system of more than 60 schools. Although his output since then is four full length plays and nearly a million words

in newspapers and magazines, he's still our "resident playwright"; and he's promised to deliver one a year. There are mutual advantages to this; he sees his plays staged, while our Troupe thrills at being the springboard for one of the newer playwrights.

Staging an original play has many satisfactions. Highland High, despite its newness, has several hindrances to dramatics; and "world premieres" help the audience forget the unavoidable drawbacks.

Foremost is the excitement at having a premiere audience. On opening night we invite dramatics classes and teachers from other schools, Little Theater workers, and university teachers and students in both literature and drama. This brings more than 200 able critics on hand. Thus when Erhard's recent "High White Star" succeeded before such an audience, we knew we had premiered a play worthy of high school production anywhere.

Our school, built in the furious post-war boom, has no auditorium. Thus all productions must utilize arena staging, and we borrow one end of the girls' gymnasium. Actors and student directors must work harder on their performances and planning in order to succeed.

With an increased emphasis then on the learning of dramatics, original plays are a decided help. Each production gives the students a full year's work in the drama.

The first phase begins in September when Erhard brings in a rough draft



Photo by C. E. Redman

Creative Dramatics work is possible at a high level in the production of a new script. Here author Tom Erhard explains a scene to Anne Shannon, Thespian sponsor, and student director, Betty Stutsman.

and the Thespians go through a preliminary cold reading. This not only gives them a first look at the play they will later stage, but enables the author to get first impressions from the teen-agers. They can be the best critics, because they are not afraid to pipe up bluntly, "Gee, this line stinks."

After revisions the next step is cold reading as an assigned part of dramatics class. Erhard brings in several copies; we spend about a week in cold reading and several more days in discussion. Again the rough spots stand out, and the script grows closer to its final form. For additional polishing we usually hold still another reading and critique by the more experienced Thespians.

After the script is mimeographed, casting and rehearsals begin early in the second semester. This is one of the most educational moments for the student director. In our Thespian play our third full length production each year, we use a senior as director; and this position has become more prized than the best acting role.

Working closely with the author, the student director really digs into the blocking, staging problems, and the thousand and one decisions to be made. Here too the cast gets its most creative opportunity. Working with an unproduced play, they have more incentive to understand their characters fully and bring them to life. On more than one occasion a cast member, ill at ease with some lines, has suggested helpful revisions. This brings about a more sharply drawn character in the script and far more dramatic understanding by the student.

Finally comes production with its thrills plus the supreme excitement of bringing forth a new play.

(Continued on page 31)

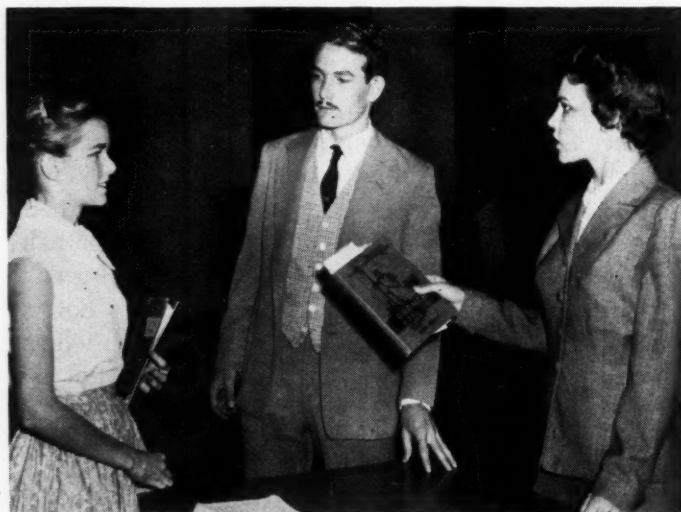


Photo by C. E. Redman

More meat than in the usual high school farce is author Tom Erhard's recipe for high school comedy. Here's a scene from *The High White Star*.

THE GREAT ELIZABETH

By CHARLES R. TRUMBO
and POLLYANN

ON SUNDAY, the 7th of September, 1533, an infant girl was born to Queen Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII, her husband. To celebrate the occasion a solemn *Te Deum* was sung. Magnificent preparations were made for her christening. The ceremonies were held in the church of the Grey Friars. The child was brought into the hall of the palace, and the procession set out for the church. All the walls between Greenwich Palace and the convent of the Grey Friars were hung with tapestries. The line of march was strewn with fresh green rushes. The Bishop of London received the infant at the church door. Gentlemen wearing aprons and towels guarded the font, which stood in the middle of the church. The font was of silver and raised to a height of three steps. Over it was a square canopy of crimson satin fringed with gold. The railed-in-space about the font was covered with red say, a serge-like fabric. Between the choir and chancel a closet with a fire had been prepared in case the child should get cold while being disrobed for the christening. The baby was wrapped in a mantle of purple velvet, with a train of regal length, trimmed with ermine.

With all the rites of the church of Rome this future queen received the name of her grandmother, Elizabeth of York. Then the Garter king-at-arms cried out, "God, of His infinite goodness, send a prosperous life and long, to the high and mighty princess of England, Elizabeth!" A flourish of trumpets sounded, and the royal child was borne to the altar. The gospel was read over her, and she was confirmed by Bishop Cranmer, who with the other sponsors presented the christening gifts. He gave her a standing cup of gold, and the Duchess of Norfolk a cup of gold fretted with pearls. The Marchioness of Dorset gave three gilt bowls with covers. The Marchioness of Exeter three standing bowls, graven and gilt, with covers.

The procession back to the palace was lighted by five hundred staff torches, which were carried by the yeomen of the guard and the king's servants. The infant herself was surrounded by gentlemen bearing wax-flambeaux.

At the age of seventeen Elizabeth affected extreme simplicity of dress, influenced by the Puritan movement that was penetrating England. Her father had given her rich clothes and jewels, but she was known to have worn them only once before she became queen. She clung to this simplicity in spite of

the French fashions that found their way into her brother King Edward VI's court by way of the royal court of Scotland.

Her brother Edward and sister Mary both having died, Elizabeth was proclaimed Queen of England on November 17, 1558. What she failed to make use of in the way of costume while she was at the tender age of seventeen, she made up for after she was crowned queen. Elizabeth at the age of seventy had three thousand gowns and eighty wigs of different colors. A striking contrast from what she wore at the age of seventeen! Her portraits show a profusion of



ornaments: a head of hair loaded with crowns and powdered with diamonds, a vast ruff, a large farthingale, and a "bushel" of pearls—a feature by which everyone at once recognizes the pictures of Elizabeth.

So jealous did she become of the privilege of wearing expensive or attractive clothes that she passed an order in 1579 that no person should use or wear excessively long cloaks, nor great ruffs about their necks. In her father's reign he passed an act prohibiting the use of cloth of gold, silver, or tinsel, satin, silk, or cloth mixed with gold, any sable, fur, velvet, embroidery in gowns or outer garments, except for persons of distinction, such as dukes, marquesses, earls, or gentlemen and knights that had an income of 250 pounds per year. This

act was renewed by Elizabeth, and no one who had less than 100 pounds per year was to wear satin or damask, or fur of conies. No one with less than 20 pounds per year, or 200 pounds capital, could wear any fur except lamb, nor cloth above 10 shillings per yard.

In the spring of 1580 Elizabeth, having thought it proper to check the height and amplitude of the royal ruff, had certain officials empowered to stand at street corners, armed with shears, to clip all ruffs that exceeded the size prescribed by law.

We may get an over-all picture of Elizabeth's dress and ornaments from some of the many gifts she received each New Year's. She received every imaginable article of dress and ornament from the richest jewels to such articles as gloves, pocket-handkerchiefs, night-dresses, and night-caps. A certain Mrs. Crompton presented her with a night-coif of cambric cut-work and spangles, with a forehead-cloth and a border of cut-work, edged with bone-lace. The wife of



Julio, one of the court physicians, gave her a cushion-cloth, and a pillow case of cambric made with black silk. In the middle of Elizabeth's reign the favorite embroidery appears to have been black silk on white cambric. This was a strange freak of fashion, since it is difficult to imagine how the whiteness of the cambric could be renewed without ruining the work. "Mistress" Twist, the court laundress, made a present to her royal mistress of three handkerchiefs of black Spanish work, edged with bone-lace of Venetian gold, and four *tooth cloths* of coarse Holland, made with black silk and edged with bone-lace of silver and black silk. The bone-lace was very elaborate and delicate, made of various colored silks, and gold and silver

(Continued on page 30)

LET'S HAVE a READERS' THEATER

By LESLIE IRENE COGER

YOU HAVE appeared in plays with others, and you have appeared alone reading poetry, stories, and plays. Now let's combine the two and have a readers' theater. Let us as a group read a play or a short story or a series of short sketches. That this form of reading is becoming very popular with audiences has been testified by the success of *Don Juan in Hell* throughout the nation. Charles Laughton, Sir Cedric Hardwick, Agnes Morehead, and Charles Boyer, using the words of the third act of Shaw's *Man and Superman* plus four lecterns and four stools, entertained enthusiastic groups from New York to California. With a different staging technique the success was repeated with Benet's long narrative poem, *John Brown's Body*. Since then O'Casey's autobiographical novel, *Pictures in the Hallway*, has received similar treatment. Schools and colleges are experimenting with this form using such diversity of materials as Thomas Wolf's *Look Homeward Angel*, Henry James's *The Other House*, Christopher Fry's *A Phoenix Too Frequent*, and Mark Twain's *Diary of Adam* and *Diary of Eve*.

One reason for the popularity of this form of reading is the demand it makes upon the imagination of the hearer. The scenes and action take place within his mind. He is a participator, and the extent of his response will depend in part on his capacity to feel the situations and to recreate them imaginatively. The form interests the audience because each member has an active part in the presentation. Since there is no dependence on outside trappings, the reading centers the whole interest on the writer's text.

Experimentation in presenting reader's theater is continuing. There are no set rules. A group may try the same material in different ways. Two readers in presenting cuttings from Shaw's *St. Joan* tried turning slightly towards each other for the speeches of Joan and the Dauphin. They discovered that they wanted to act, to have a "fourth wall" between them and the audience. They were no longer readers sharing the author's words with the audience. By changing their technique so that instead of looking at each other they were focusing on the imaginary character located in front of them, the readers found that they were recreating the scene in the realm of the imagination. The audience on whom they were experimenting reported that they became involved much more in the scene when the two did not look at each other.

The distance between the readers was another factor with which they tried

different techniques. They were most successful when they stood close enough together that the listeners could see both their faces rather easily. The one not speaking wanted to know what he should do. He tried looking down at his script. He tried being impassive. Allowing his face and his eyes to reflect his reaction to the words seemed best. Reading from a lectern, which allowed the reader complete freedom of body, worked better than holding the script in the hand. The muscle tone of the body as well as the facial expression revealed the response to the other's words. Experiments were conducted in which the other readers turned their backs or walked off the stage when they were not an integral part of the scene. Both of these techniques proved distracting. In working with a large cast, seat them behind a long narrow table. With smaller groups use lecterns and tall stools. The speaker can stand or sit as he reads his lines.

So far this discussion has centered on the reading of a play using a narrator and different readers for the various characters, although one reader sometimes reads more than one character's speeches. The short story and novel, not being entirely in dialogue, offer other problems. The narration becomes more important than in a play. A narrator may be used. But part of the narration may be given by the characters. Statements that are clearly from the point of view of one of the characters may be spoken by that character. This "interior thought" is similar to the dialogue O'Neill used in *Strange Interlude*. Not only would his characters speak to the others but they would face front and say aloud their inner thoughts. In the reunion scene of Peter and Clarissa in Virginia Woolf's novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*, much of the story is told through their thoughts. It would be very appropriate for the two who read the speeches of Peter and Clarissa to read aloud also the thoughts that run through their minds as they see each other again after many years. Dorothy Parker's story, *You Were Perfectly Fine*, can be read by two people in a similar manner.

Poetry may be used for group reading. The presentation of *John Brown's Body* not only used passages read by individuals but poetry read chorally. This form of group reading has a long history going back to Greek choruses and having a modern revival in the thirties. Under the direction of a good leader it can be very effective. An entire program on negro literature was given by a group of ten students. Among the selections was

the poem, *Let America Be America Again*, by Langston Hughes. Much of this was read by the entire group, but individual voices were used for the farmer, the steel worker, and the negro. Frost's *The Death of the Hired Man* could be read with a narrator and the two characters, the farmer and his wife. Or the introductory portion could be read by Mary since it is all from her viewpoint. Another type of group reading of poetry was seen on the TV program, "Camera Three." Five people were forced to spend twenty-four hours in a railway station. These five, a young man and woman, an older man and woman, and a young boy speak the thoughts of various poets on the hours of the day. The old woman muses "I like the calm of the early day--." The young lady listens and says, "The cock that is herald of the day--" while the young man says, "Only that day dawns to which we are awake--." And so the whole twenty-four hours pass with the white heat of noon, the darkness following the parting day, the night "unsuited for beauty," and waking at morning. The poems were suited to the hours and to the ages of the people speaking them, and a story element was added by having the characters become aware of and respond to each other. Given such a setting, these poems struck deeply into the minds of the listening audience.

Literature suitable for readers' theater is quite varied. Much lyric as well as narrative poetry may be used. Many short stories and chapters from novels lend themselves to this medium. A delightful program was given using two people reading the letters and poems of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett. Plays are easily adapted for readers. However, some are more suited for this form of presentation than others. As a rule, one should avoid those plays depending on visual aspects, although a narrator can often make us see the scene as the messengers did in the Greek tragedies. Plays of idea, of historical and social significance work well. George Bernard Shaw not only expresses provocative thoughts, he expresses them very well. Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* and Ibsen's *Enemy of the People* have been used successfully.

There are many values in readers' theater for the classroom situation. More students may participate. The play program is limited by the budget. The plays demanding many sets and period costumes are often avoided because of the expense and labor involved. In the readers' theater these are not limiting factors. Thus a greater variety of plays may be brought into the cultural realm of the students. It is excellent for teaching appreciation. Since staging difficulties will not demand the attention of the director, more time is available for structural analysis of the play. Similarly,

(Continued on page 29)

AMERICAN MUSICAL THEATER: PRODUCTION PROBLEMS

By DELWIN B. DUSENBURY

IN TRACING the history of America's musical theater from its origin to approximately 1920, it is the hope that this series of articles has reminded students and directors of the exciting theatrical heritage that this glittering chapter has contributed to our theater history. The parade of productions and personalities from the past indicates the inherent vitality and vigor of the American musical theater—a vitality which can be transmitted to any educational or community theater schedule which includes musical productions. Therefore before turning to Part II of this series which will deal with the American musical theater from 1920 to 1957 (DRAMATICS, 1958-59) let us consider for a moment some of the problems and questions facing the "do-it-yourself" producers of musical presentations.

The musical production is already an important part of many high school theater programs as illustrated by the photographic covers of DRAMATICS: one showing a production of *The King and I* (Ashland, Ohio, High School), and another a scene from *South Pacific* (Muskegon Heights, Michigan, High School). The playbills of some high schools, many community theaters, and more universities indicate the musical comedy is now an annual event of each season. But for the wary few, possibly the following paragraphs may provide the necessary encouragement to participate in one of the most stimulat-

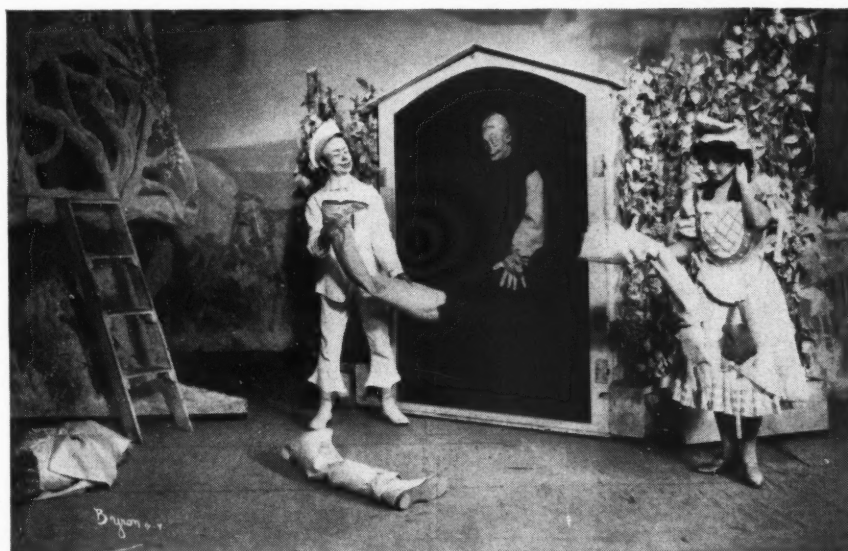
ing theatrical experiences possible for cast and audience alike—producing a musical comedy.

Not too many years ago, a community desirous of presenting a musical production with a local cast, would avail themselves of a service which even today is not obsolete. Harlowe R. Hoyt, in his nostalgic reminiscences of life in a small Wisconsin town titled *Town Hall To-*

night, tells of the excitement surrounding the arrival of a Mr. Milton who came to direct *The Brownies in Fairyland*, a musical extravaganza which had been popular at the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893. He brought with him not only exact duplicates of the original costumes and properties, but also the professional "know-how" of staging the production. Of course ample opportunity was afforded between scenes and even during the production itself for individual "home talent" specialties of the song-and-dance variety. The presentation concluded with a May-pole dance and, as Mr. Hoyt emphasizes, "the hasty departure of Mr. Milton to the next town."

Even today many communities avail themselves of the services of enterprising

(Continued on page 27)



Utilizing the simple masking device of black drapes, Fred Stone as "The Scarecrow" in *The Wizard of Oz* (1903) gives the illusion of having lost his legs and an arm.



Photo by Photo Service, Univ. of Fla.

The transformation of Senator Rawkins in *Finian's Rainbow* (Act I, Sc. 5) as staged by the University of Florida Players under the direction of Dr. Dusenbury.

THEATER



FOR

CHILDREN

FRIEDA E. REED

TRENDS IN HIGH SCHOOL CHILDREN'S THEATER

THE FOLLOWING article is based upon a study prepared for a Master's thesis at the University of South Dakota by L. R. Kremer, Director of Dramatics at Washington Senior High School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Troupe 783 of the National Thespian Society is located at Washington High School.

Enthusiastic workers in Children's Theater in the high schools have a tendency to become so engrossed in their own work that they may lose sight of what others are doing and to be unaware of the trends of this very important movement of which they are a part. Hence, it is very valuable to have the results of a research project in this area, which Mr. Kremer has made available to readers of *DRAMATICS*. The opinions reported in this article represent thirty-two schools, located from California to Delaware and Virginia; and from Texas to Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan. From here on, Mr. Kremer speaks for himself.

"Have high schools, after adopting Children's Theater, abandoned it?" This question was asked during a discussion period at the AETA Convention in Boston last August. No one among the



Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater, Troupe 783, Washington Sr. High School, Sioux Falls, S.D., L. R. Kremer, Sponsor.

more than thirty people present knew of a case where this was true. Among thirty-two directors who responded to a questionnaire sent out during the 1955-56 school year, only two suggested that they had considered it. Both of these would replace it with some other entertainment for younger children. Directors more often responded by saying, 'Children's Theater is the last thing we would give up.'

"Why are high schools adopting children's plays? According to the answers to the questionnaire, some began because they wanted to try something different. Others were asked to replace professional companies that were no longer available or that had become inadequate. Some directors had come to the conclusion that the children's play was an

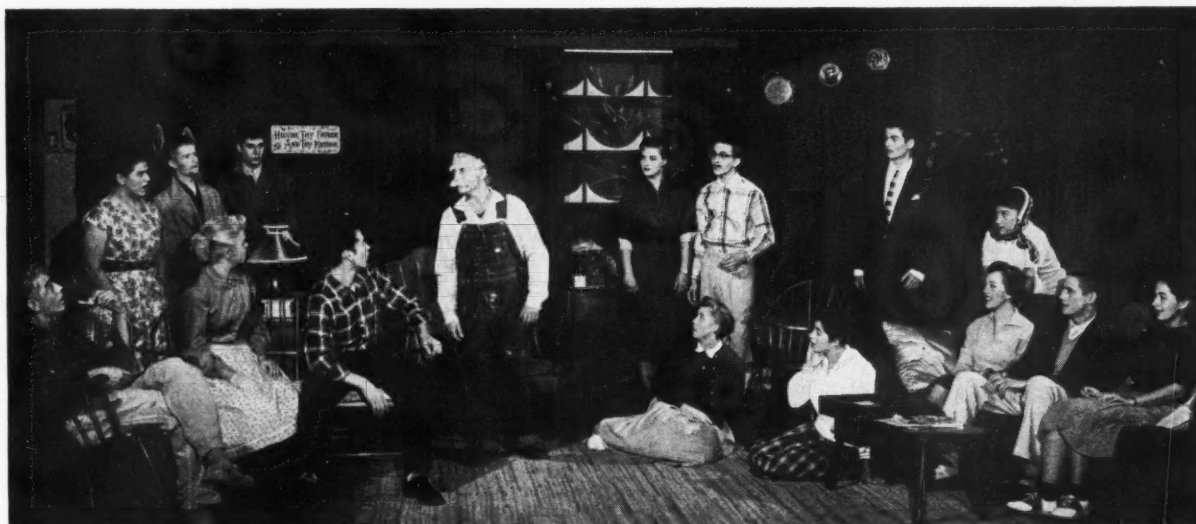
admirable vehicle for training high school students in theater. Others felt that this was one way to make a real contribution to the developing taste of children in the community. Many schools have received their inspiration from Junior Leagues and other women's or parents' organizations interested in Children's Theater. In a few cases, a better box office than that afforded by the conventional play was an element in the decision. Needless to say, the organization of the Children's Theater Conference made its influence felt. Three out of four publishers (investigated) reported increased leaseings of children's plays since the Conference was organized. Of the thirty-two schools represented in this study, only four had a production record of more than ten years at the time of reporting, and seventeen had been producing children's plays four years or less.

"In most cases, the plays were a part of the extra-curricular program, but a significant minority prepared them as a part of the dramatics class curriculum. Four schools reported three to four plays a year, enough to classify their activity as a Children's Theater organization. On the other hand, seventeen of the thirty-two schools produced only one children's play a year. This latter group was about equally divided: half of them operated independently; the others, as one unit in an organized group. For example, in Racine, Wisconsin, two public schools and one Catholic school combined with seven women's organizations to give the city six plays for children a year. Production in that city was on a round-robin basis. It appears that the high schools are taking a significant place in the production of entertainment for children.

"Of the reporting schools there were three methods used to get the play to the children. Nine schools trouped their plays during school hours. The others



Simple Simon, Troupe 783, Washington Sr. High School, Sioux Falls, S. D., L. R. Kremer, Sponsor.



January Thaw, Troupe 976, John Marshall High School, Los Angeles, Calif., Jayne Crawley, Sponsor.

presented them in a theater or high-school auditorium. Slightly more than half of this group used school time. The others gave early evening performances and Saturday matinees.

"Washington Senior High School presented its seventh annual children's play this year. It has used all three methods of presentation. After two years of playing on school time, we met some reluctance on the part of teachers and principals of the elementary schools to moving student bodies of up to six hundred to the high school, which is in the downtown section of a city of 70,000. During the next two years we trouped the plays. With this method little scenery was possible, and during the time that the high school performing students could be excused from classes, only sixty per cent of the elementary children could be reached. Beginning in 1956, we moved the play back to the high school auditorium. Now two early evening performances and two matinees are given. Parents are urged to attend, and the children's play may well be called the family play.

"All of the thirty-two schools reported good attendance. One director said, 'I did conventional plays, and nobody came. Now, since I do children's plays, I play to a full house.' Half of the schools reporting play to audiences of one thousand or more; of these, twelve have audiences of over two thousand, and two schools report playing to over five thousand children. All schools investigated for this study are located in cities of above 5000 population.

"Another matter probed was 'What happens when five to fifteen hundred children gather for a show? Are there discipline problems?' In reply to these queries it was learned that often when the plays are done on school time, teachers are present. In productions at other times, in some cases, there are older students or parents in attendance; and in some cases, there are no chaperons at all! In none of these

varied audience situations were there any serious discipline problems."

So far it would seem that all of the reports indicate favorable and encouraging progress. However, Mr. Kremer says,

"Problems do exist. The lack of good material was most often mentioned. 'We need more Chorpy plays!' was the way one director put it.¹ Others urged, 'More historical plays and not so many fairy tales.' Still others complained, 'Numerous settings and too few roles for women limit selection.' Difficulties in scheduling and getting performers out of classes make things harder in many cases. Almost all trouping units complained that scenery and/or lighting is often unsatisfactory.

"All but three directors reported upon projects originated by themselves. Answers concerning public relations and relations with elementary schools showed that little had been done in these areas. It is certainly unfortunate that these important phases of good promotion are being neglected.² It is not hard to sell the Children's Theater idea to actors and audience, but even good activities need to be sold and resold if they are to become permanent. Children's plays should become a 'fixture' in every senior high school."

It is evident that Mr. Kremer has done a much needed job in his organized in-

vestigation of the situation of Children's Theater in high schools. It is hoped that as more and more schools join the ranks of Children's Theater producers, Mr. Kremer or some other worker in this area will continue the investigation thus started so that problems and needs will be brought to general attention. Only in this way can solutions to the problems be found.

Since this is the time of year to begin looking toward next year's Thespian calendar of activities, it is hoped that those troupes not yet belonging to the group of CT producers may regard seriously the declaration of those high school groups who declare vehemently that Children's Theater would be the last project to be dropped from their schedule.

CT Editor's Footnotes:

(1) Those producers who say "We need more Chorpy plays!" are right! But let's remember that we have not stopped producing plays these past three hundred and fifty years because there hasn't been another Shakespeare! Certainly, no one would think of minimizing the quality of Charlotte Chorpenning's plays or her real understanding of children's audiences and their dramatic needs, and she has left a fine list of plays that could keep any group busy for a while. However, there are other good playwrights for children, and there are more and more writers experimenting with scripts in this area. In Winifred Ward's excellent book, *Theatre for Children*, there are well over three hundred tested and classified plays listed, which could keep any group busy and active for a few years, so that no group need feel stymied for lack of challenging scripts. Children's Theater Conference sponsors a "New Scripts" project, and anyone interested in reading some good new plays in manuscript form should communicate with DRAMATICS CT editor.

(2) Mr. Kremer calls attention to the report from the questionnaires involved in his research that there is a minimum of active collaboration with the elementary schools. This writer agrees with Mr. Kremer that this neglect is a very serious one, and shortsighted. It has been our experience that elementary teachers and principals are more than eager to support and encourage the work of the high school producers of Children's Theater. All they need is the opportunity!

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THE WILLOW AND I

Howard High School, Ocala, Florida

THE LOWER sitting-room of the Sutro home in the South was the setting for the senior class play at Howard High School, Ocala, Florida. *The Willow and I* is a drama in three acts by John Patrick. It was first produced at the Windsor Theater, New York, December 10, 1942.

As soon as the curtain opens, one senses the conflict between the two sisters of this household. The keynote of the drama is revealed when Mara says, "I walked into this room on a summer day. I was young—in a gracious world. I closed my eyes. A moment later, it is winter—I find myself in an alien land, and I am old." The plot begins to thicken when Mara, on her wedding night, loses her memory as a result of a shot fired by her sister. For twenty years Mara sits in a realm of complete unreality and stares at the Willow Tree that her father planted on

her natal day. The spectacular manner in which a flash of lightning and a roar of thunder break her long silence and bring a slight glow in her dim, motionless eyes make a thrilling and gripping climax to all the many incidents that follow. The humorous lines of the disabled, drunken father relieve the tension that runs throughout the play. There are good roles for two small boys who have a fancy for acting.

We produced the play with one set, showing the lapse of time by changing draperies and furnishings, and the radio effect was secured by using two turntables. Records for thunder and rainfall were purchased from Dennison, and flash bulbs were used to produce the effect of lightning.

The play has a wistful appeal and offers a good opportunity for character acting. I highly recommend *The Willow and I*.

THELMA M. PARKER
Sponsor, Troupe 1380

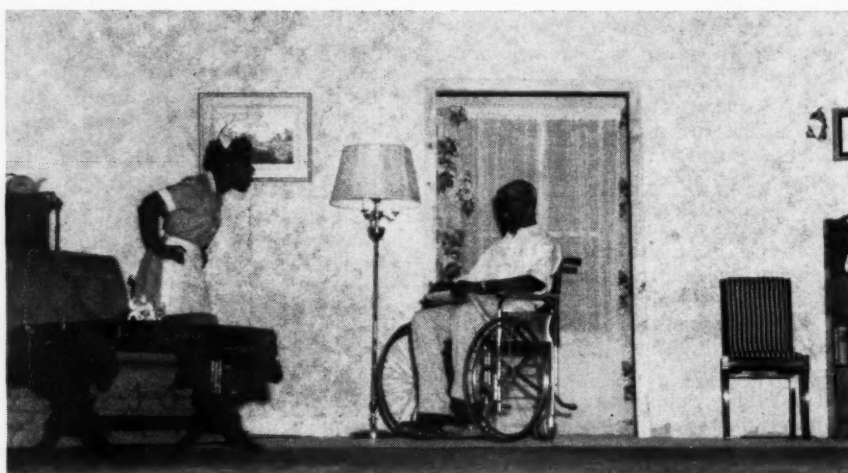
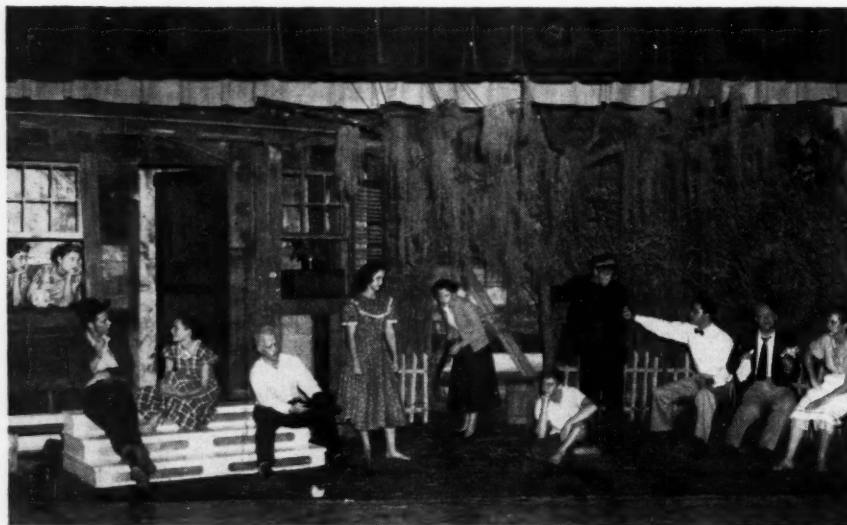


Photo by Williams

The Willow and I, Troupe 1380, Howard Academy, Ocala, Fla.,
Thelma M. Parker, Sponsor.



The Great Big Doorstep, Troupe 829, Milby Sr. High School, Houston, Texas,
Richard M. Niemi, Sponsor.

PLAYS OF THE MONTH

Edited By EARL BLANK

THE GREAT BIG DOORSTEP

Milby High School, Houston, Texas

I CAN SAY without reservation that *The Great Big Doorstep* is the most enjoyable play presented by Troupe 829 out of 32 productions in the past nine years. It proved to be such an audience and cast pleaser in 1952 that it was decided upon for the senior production last year. When first looking at the size of the cast, twelve, a director might be tempted to shy away from it, but after study of the characters, it is evident that if you have a capable, slightly overweight young man to take the main role of The Commodore, the rest of the casting is comparatively simple.

The play is a comedy about a shiftless backwoodsman and his innumerable offspring in the Mississippi delta region. The Crotchets are "Cajuns." The Commodore has been reduced from river pilot to ditch digger, though he prefers to call himself a Drainage Consultant. He is a thoroughly lovable but lazy good-for-nothing with such a reluctance to work that his wife and attractive children live hungrily in a shaky little shack. In front of the shack, however, he has placed a magnificent doorstep that has obviously once graced someone's great mansion but has been found by the family floating down the Mississippi. The play centers around their efforts to build a house around it. The set is the exterior of the Crotch home, a dilapidated shack built on piles a couple of feet from the ground. It covers the stage from the extreme right on an angle, running up almost to the center of the stage. Don't let this frighten you away! We built ours on our "Cracker-box" stage measuring only 24 feet across and 14 feet from curtain line to rear wall. It can be done.

RICHARD M. NIEMI
Sponsor, Troupe 829

PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD

Neenah, Wisconsin, High School

ONE OF THE best-received plays at our high school in recent years was our latest presentation, J. M. Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*. It being International Theater Month, we felt that this famous play would be a challenging and interesting production.

PUBLISHERS

The Enchanted Cottage, Walter H. Baker Co., Boston, Mass.
The Great Big Doorstep, Dramatic Publishing Co., Chicago, Ill.
The Willow and I, Dramatists Play Service, N. Y. C.
Playboy of the Western World, Samuel French, Inc., N. Y. C.

**THE WILLOW AND I
THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE
THE GREAT BIG DOORSTEP
PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD**

County Mayo, Ireland, is the setting for this comedy, and the one set required in the play adapts itself quite easily to a high school stage. We used a background of Irish music for the first part of each act which seemed to lend an authentic atmosphere to the presentation.

The story concerns Pegeen Mike, a headstrong Irish girl, who is a barmaid in her father's saloon. One day, a shy, meek, young man, Christy Mahon, enters the bar and says he's killed his father. Because of his audacious bravery, Christy is regarded as a hero and is offered a job in the bar. Pegeen falls in love with him, but when Christy's father appears, very much alive, Pegeen and all of County Mayo consider him a liar and an imposter. So Christy makes another attempt to kill his father in order to win back the respect and love of Pegeen.

When he desires to know whether he has again won Pegeen's love, she tells him that a brave story about some remote happening is one thing but when it happens in your own back yard, it's a dirty deed, and she wants her father and his friends to hang Christy. This they are about to do when Christy's father comes crawling in looking much the worse for wear, but alive all the same. He and Christy leave the "fools" of Mayo to go back home. Because of this courage in the face of danger, Christy has finally become a real hero and will go "romancing through a romping lifetime" while Pegeen laments her lack of faith in Christy and her quickness to judge him a coward and a murderer. "I've lost the only Playboy of the Western World," she says as the curtain closes.

Our biggest problem in *Playboy* was

to make the Irish phrasing intelligible to our audiences. We conquered this problem by stressing that articulateness, facial expressions, gesture, and bodily action had to be exaggerated to an unrealistic degree in order to convey our message to the audience.

We think it is truly worthwhile to attempt shows as difficult as this one and will endeavor to continue avoiding the so-called "catalogue" plays. We feel as G. B. Shaw felt that a play in order to be worthwhile, must teach the audience something at least to the extent that their conventions and beliefs are truly challenged.

ELIZABETH DREW
President, Troupe 103

(Continued on page 26)

BROADWAY LINE-UP

BARRYMORE—*Look Homeward Angel*, Anthony Perkins, Jo Van Fleet, Hugh Griffith. Drama.

BOOTH—*Two for the Seesaw*, Henry Fonda, Anne Bancroft. Comedy.

BROADHURST THEATER—*Auntie Mame*, Greer Garson. Comedy.

CORT—*Sunrise at Campobello*, Ralph Belamy, Mary Fickett. Drama.

46TH STREET THEATER—*New Girl in Town*, Evelyn Ward, Thelma Ritter. Musical comedy.

HELLINGER THEATER—*My Fair Lady*, Edward Mulhare, Sally Ann Howes. Musical comedy.

LYCEUM—*Look Back in Anger*, Mary Ure, Kenneth Haigh. Drama.

MAJESTIC—*Music Man*, Robert Preston, Barbara Cook. Musical comedy.

MOROSCO—*Time Remembered*, Helen Hayes, Richard Burton, Susan Strasberg. Comedy.

MUSIC BOX—*Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, Teresa Wright, Pat Hingle, Eileen Heckart. Drama.

PLYMOUTH—*Romanoff and Juliet*, Peter Ustinov. Comedy.

ST. JAMES THEATER—*Li'l Abner*, Edith Adams. Musical comedy.

SHUBERT THEATER—*The Bells Are Ringing*, Judy Holliday. Musical comedy.

WINTER GARDEN—*West Side Story*, Carol Lawrence, Larry Kert, Chita Rivera. Musical.



Playboy of the Western World, Troupe 103, Neenah, Wisc., Sr. High School, Kenneth Anderson, Sponsor.



Enchanted Cottage, Troupe 258, Ensley High School, Birmingham, Ala., Florence Pass, Sponsor.



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BEFORE THE PLAY

By Jeanne Deschamps

Bainbridge H. S., Winslow, Wash., Troupe 416

Rehearsals are over —
It's time at last;
Everybody is present
From audience to cast.
The director is rushing
From left to right
Straightening scenery,
Turning on lights.
Tonight, for the last time,
Costumes are donned;
Lines are silently rehearsed,
And make-up is put on.
Remember, remember
Every single line;
Get ready, get ready,
It's almost time.
Quiet! Quiet!
Only a minute to go.
Everyone ready?
It's time for the show!
All in your places?
If not, better run.
Cast in position?
The time has come!
Up goes the curtain —
On goes the light;
Remember your lines
And forget your stagefright!
From the very first moment
There's a change in our heart;
The audience is forgotten
As we live our part.
First act, second act,
Third act, and now
It's over! Everyone's taking
Bow after bow.
The play's a success —
Just hear the applause!
And with dignity and grace
The curtain falls.

PLAYS OF THE MONTH

(Continued from page 25)

THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE

Ensley High School, Birmingham, Ala.

THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE, a fable in 3 acts, by Arthur Wing Pinero was a challenge to the more advanced players of our troupe, and it also provided an opportunity for a large group of the less experienced ones.

The locale is rural England, 1920. There is only one set. Pinero labels the acts: Act I. Relics of war; Act II. Strange Happenings and a Dream; Act III. Eternal Truth.

The plot: Lieutenant Oliver Bashford, a wounded soldier of World War 1 has rented a cottage. Here he lives in seclusion because of war injuries which left him crippled and disfigured. Into his life comes Laura Pennington, a thin, plain young woman. They are drawn to each other, and in an effort to escape his mother's misguided efforts to help him, Oliver persuades Laura to marry him. The moment they cross the threshold on their return from their wedding a miracle takes place: Laura becomes beautiful and all signs of Oliver's injuries are gone. They are radiantly happy and conclude that the cottage is enchanted. When they invite their friends to come and see the great change that has come to them, alas, they can detect no change. Only Mrs. Minnett, the strange housekeeper, can explain "The Eternal Truth,"

COMING YOUR WAY

ME AND THE COLONEL, drama, Danny Kaye, Curt Jurgens. (COL)

TUNNEL OF LOVE, musical, Doris Day, Glenn Ford. (MGM)

THE RELUCTANT DEBUTANTE, comedy, Rex Harrison, Kay Kendall, John Saxon, Sandra Dee. (MGM)

ROCK-A-BYE BABY, comedy, Jerry Lewis, Marilyn Maxwell. (PARA)

THE BUCCANEER, drama with music, Yul Brynner, Charlton Heston, Claire Bloom, Inger Stevens. (PARA)

THE BARBARIAN, drama, John Wayne, Elko Ando. (20TH-FOX)

ONIONHEAD, comedy, Andy Griffith, Felicia Farr. (WB)

THE NAKED AND THE DEAD, drama, Aldo Ray, Cliff Robertson. (WB)

THIS HAPPY FEELING, comedy drama, Debbie Reynolds, Curt Jurgens. (UI)

TWILIGHT FOR THE GODS, drama, Rock Hudson, Cyd Charisse. (UI)

and they find real happiness at last.

The set is comparatively easy. We used wedge wood blue walls, English print drapes, and dark furniture. The bay window and stairs play an important part. In the dream scene moonlight shining through the window gave an eerie atmosphere for the dance of the *Wee Ones* and the witches. We rented costumes for the "shadow" men, borrowed and made the others.

We enjoyed doing *The Enchanted Cottage*. No cutting was necessary; the characterizations are within the experience of high school students. It is a play one doesn't forget.

FLORENCE PASS
Sponsor, Troupe 258

THE MATTER WITH MILDRED

By Cecil G. Stephens

A lovable new comedy written for a cast of 6 men, 4 women.

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Here's a sparkling, an enchanting play with hearty laughs (and a few tears) about an inhibited young girl, Mildred, a senior in high school who is caught up in the surge of family discord, a prying neighbor, and alas! no date for the senior prom. Mildred is a bewildered young lady whose emotional and social changes are not fully understood by her harassed mother and her overworked and underpaid father. Resentment, too, of Uncle Julius, a paying guest, doesn't help nor does contempt for the neighbor. The

last straw is rejection by a boy friend, which results in a nervous breakdown. Tranquilizer pills are prescribed and supposedly result in the creation of a state of extreme excitement as Mildred sheds her inhibitions. With the shedding of restraint havoc becomes rampant, as Mildred says just what she thinks to people. Eventually a wise psychologist makes Mildred realize she has been indulging in monkeyshines to overcome a guilt complex and she admits she's been putting on an act.

BAKER'S



PLAYS

569 BOYLSTON ST.

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PRODUCTION PROBLEMS

(Continued from page 21)

young directors whose profession it is to travel from community to community to produce musical revues, variety shows, and other forms of musical theater. And fortunately the problems of royalty and costumes — two major financial barriers for many groups — have been recognized and partially solved by the leasing agents and costume companies.

Allen Whitehead of Music Theater Incorporated, organized in 1954 to serve as an agent of contemporary musical productions for non-professional presentation, reports that royalty fees are quoted individually since "each group has its own limitations and problems," and "these factors are taken into consideration in arriving at fees that are equitable to both the groups and the property." In addition, a moderate rental charge is made for rehearsal material which usually includes a director's script, a set of speaking sides, a piano-conductor score and orchestrations, if necessary. Many groups use a single piano, duo-piano or piano and electric organ for the musical accompaniment. Similar royalty arrangements can be made with Rodgers and Hammerstein, Tams-Witmark, and other leasing agents of musical properties.

As more and more schools turn to the musical production, a wide choice of types of musical comedies and plays is

now available. During the past year the most popular productions in the Music Theater Incorporated library included the delightful satire of the '20's, *The Boy Friend*; Frank Loesser's "fable of Broadway," *Guys and Dolls*, and his musical adaptation of *Charley's Aunt*, *Where's Charley?*; Irving Berlin's amusing comedy of the diplomatic corps in Lichtenburg, *Call Me Madam*; and the gay tale of the trials and tribulations of working in a pajama factory, *The Pajama Game*. At the same time the melodious scores of Rodger and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma*, Jerome Kern's *Showboat*, and Lerner and Loewe's *Brigadoon* are performed along with the standard Victor Herbert and Sigmund Romberg operettas and the comic operas of Gilbert and Sullivan. For further evidence of the wide range of available musical shows, directors should consult Lehman Engel's invaluable but all-too-brief *Planning and Producing The Musical Show* (Crown, N. Y., \$3.00), for his "Check List of Musical Productions," which contains such information as cast numbers, costumes, setting, orchestration, available recordings, and the leasing agent for each production.

In preparing this article, queries were made of the high school directors who have recently produced a musical, and one of the most interesting replies came from William Mask, who directed the first high school performance of *The*

King and I at Ashland (Ohio) High School. He reported a feeling of skepticism as to "whether high school students could do justice to the work of Rodgers and Hammerstein," which was readily refuted by the production itself and this comment in the Ashland *Times Gazette*:

An accomplishment like "The King and I" production here is, we believe, unassailable proof of the marvelous job our schools are doing. The talents of these young people are being turned into first-class techniques unusual and unmatched by any school we have seen function anywhere....

It would seem almost impossible for "King and I" to be done any better and any more entertaining than it was performed by the youngsters of our community.

As for Mr. Mast, his conclusion was:

I believe I can predict without fear of contradiction, that this event will be one of the most significant and best remembered learning experiences the participants will have enjoyed during their entire high school years.

The enthusiastic response from both the community and the director is not only typical, but also indicates that often the sheer vitality and excitement of the musical theater is shared by all who participate in it.

In a previous article (see "Directing the Musical Comedy," *DRAMATICS*, April, 1956), I discussed some of the problems confronting the director of the musical show: the importance of a worthwhile



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book in selecting the musical production; general problems of casting, editing the score and script; and rehearsal procedures. In order to avoid repetition, other production problems will be discussed here.

Probably one of the most vexing problems for the director is that of choreography or dance design. It can be the "Achilles' heel" of many a nonprofessional musical production, and the director should never hesitate in calling on the services of a professional dancer in the community and preferably one associated with the Physical Education Department of the school. Professional dancers must remember, however, that they are not working with professionally-trained students and must be prepared to design a choreography to meet the limited talents of the student-dancer. Agnes DeMille, whose dance direction of *Oklahoma* was the most exciting and widely-imitated in Broadway musical shows of the 40's, suggests two basic objectives of the dance director: to move the dance and to make it interesting. She advises dance directors of musical comedies with a distinct regional American background, such as *Oklahoma* or *Plain and Fancy*, to preserve "above all the attitude and culture behind the dance gesture." In other words, while certain liberties may be taken in stylizing the action, no actual violations of the customs of a period should be made. When rehearsing *Oklahoma*, she invited the

head of the American Country Dance Society to meet with her dancers and "to spend a day instructing the boys in how to offer their hands to the women, to bow to them, to pass them in and out of the groups, courteously, gallantly, as if they cared about them." The obvious suggestion to directors who hesitate to call on others to help them is that even an expert choreographer may need to consult an expert—and does!

While the dance rehearsals are in progress, the director working with the dialogue portions of the show and planning the over-all stage movement, may find some problems in handling the transition from the spoken dialogue into the musical numbers. Musical introductions must be covered by stage business or movement, especially, when the musical director is a trifle belated in anticipating the musical "lead" into the song or dance. Even a matter of a few seconds' delay, multiplied by the number of musical selections, can add ten to fifteen minutes to the running time and slow the pacing of the show.

In pacing the show, the director may be disturbed at the first complete rehearsal of the entire production by the gaps of silence between numbers and a subsequent jerkiness and slowness of pace. The musical production in rehearsal suffers especially from the absence of applause at the end of musical numbers. The audience's applause is the adhesive agent which holds the scene together

and the mortar which fills the gaps between numbers. It fills the brief moments while curtains are closed, scenes shifted, and actors moved into place for the next scene. Then too while encores of musical numbers are not encouraged, the repetition of a popular tune can be used to cover a scene change. "The Begat Song" in *Finian's Rainbow* is first sung in a full-stage setting, but it can be encoored in front of the act curtain while the next setting is moved into place behind the closed curtain. Thus the audience is not required to wait for a scene change, and the pace of the production is not decelerated.

To many directors the musical production offers insurmountable production problems which seemingly require complicated scenery, intricate lighting effects, and in general complex stage devices. One might recall, however, the story told of an amazingly versatile performer who in 1801 in addition to giving imitations of birds, doing back somersaults over three tables, leaping over the heads of twenty soldiers with fixed bayonets and through hoops of fire, concluded his performance by whirling around on his head 250 times a minute with fireworks attached to various parts of his body! William B. Wood, the noted Philadelphia theater manager, commented, "The most pleasing part of his performance was his astonishing imitation of birds." Let this remarkable individual serve as a reminder to directors who may

try to outdo themselves in staging the musical production, that often the simplest effects are not only the easiest, but also the most effective and appreciated.

In staging *Finian's Rainbow*, we had planned to use special makeup and ultraviolet or "black light" as a means of transforming Senator Rawkins into a negro before the eyes of the audience. Preliminary experimentation soon indicated that these elaborate details would not offer satisfactory results. We solved the problem simply by having another actor dressed in a costume similar to the Senator's and already in black-face, replace the Senator on stage during the brief blackout occasioned by the flash of lightning and thunder crash which preceded the transformation. The audience, unaware of the substitution of actors, assumed the transformation had required complex stage devices and applauded the theatrical effect most enthusiastically. Even in the days before the technical advances in stage lighting, one may note in the illustration that black drapes were used effectively to give the illusion that the Scarecrow had fallen apart in *The Wizard of Oz* (1903).

As another type of theatrical inventiveness, Martyn Green describes an effective but simple bit of comedy business to cover a scene change and motivate an encore. After singing the popular "Here's a How-De-Do" in *The Mikado* to tumultuous applause, he would exit at one side of the stage, run

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rapidly behind the scenes to the opposite side of the stage and make his entrance for the encore. The limitations of stage facilities should not discourage the director, but rather, should stimulate him to devise as many theatrical tricks as possible, and the musical production always offers many opportunities for such inventiveness.

Now, as a means of whetting the appetite of high school theater directors and students, the following selected menu of available musical productions is offered for their consideration:-

A SELECTED LIST OF 20 MUSICAL PRODUCTIONS SUITABLE FOR HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION AND THE LEASING AGENTS.*

Annie Get Your Gun. (R)	Kismet. (M)
Babes in Arms. (R)	Oklahoma. (R)
Best Foot Forward. (T)	Showboat. (R)
Brigadoon. (T)	South Pacific. (R)
Call Me Madam. (M)	The Boy Friend. (M)
Carousel. (R)	The King and I. (R)
Girl Crazy. (T)	The Pajama Game. (M)
Guys and Dolls. (M)	Where's Charley? (M)
High Button Shoes. (M)	Wizard of Oz. (T)
Kiss Me Kate. (T)	Wonderful Town. (T)

*Address of Leasing Agents:-

(M) - Music Theater Incorporated 119 W. 57th St., N.Y. (19).

(R) - Rodgers and Hammerstein, 488 Madison Avenue, N.Y.C.

(T) - Tams-Witmark Music Library, 115 W. 45th St., N.Y. (36).

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READERS' THEATER

(Continued from page 20)

more emphasis can be placed upon the interpretation of character. A greater demand is made upon vocal techniques. Thus the form becomes a valuable incentive to greater study of vocal responsiveness and diction.

There are other values to the student. In addition to the variety in the repertoire of plays, a student may play roles he is not physically suited for. The physically handicapped person is not barred. Use of the script removes much of the mental and emotional strains of memorization. That fear of forgetting the lines is gone, and the student can concentrate on his interpretation. This does not imply there is no necessity of mastering the role, but the time spent in memorizing the lines is saved.

Readers' Theater is excellent to use for civic programs. The lack of a stage in the place of meeting is no hindrance. No scenery and no lights need be transported. Many students may participate rather than one or two giving individual readings. The students are given the experience of adapting to strange places and a variety of audiences. And the audiences themselves will enjoy it.

If you are interested in experimenting with new forms, why not try Readers' theater? Present literature of many types in a different form. Listen to the recordings of *Don Juan in Hell* and of *John Brown's Body*. Divide into groups; select a story, a play, a series of letters, a diary, a biography or an autobiography, or a group of poems and interpret your selection through the group medium. Share your results with each other, with the remainder of the school, and with the people of the community. It will be a rewarding experience for all.

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ELIZABETH

(Continued from page 19)

twist, as well as of white thread or black silk, worked with bone or ivory bodkins. Mrs. Amy Shelton, a kinswoman on the Boleyn side, presented six handkerchiefs of cambric edged with passament of gold and silver. Mrs. Montague, the silk-woman, sent a pair of sleeves of cambric made with roses and buds of black silk. Upon another New Year's, Mrs. Montague brought her as a gift a pair of knit black silk stockings. From that time until her death the queen never again wore cloth hose; she always insisted on having silk stockings. Mrs. Huggins brought her six handkerchiefs of various sorts: one worked with murrey-colored silk; the others with silk of various colors. Sir Philip Sidney presented to his queen a smock made of cambric, the sleeves and collar made with black silk work, and edged with bone-lace of gold and silver. He also gave her a suite of ruffs of cutwork, flourished with gold and silver and set with spangles containing four ounces of gold. Sir Philip's friend, Fluke Greville, presented the queen with another of these robes. It was a smock made of cambric, the collar and sleeves with Spanish work of roses and letters, and a night-coif with a forehead-cloth of the same work. Mrs. Wingfield presented a nightdress of cambric worked all over with black silk, and Mrs. Carre sent one sheet of fine cambric worked all over with various fowls, beasts, and worms, in silks of different colors. Sir Francis Drake sent a fan of red and white feathers enamelled with a half-moon of mother-of-pearl; and within that, a half-moon garnished with diamonds and a few seed pearls having the

queen's picture within it. On the reverse side was a device with a crow over it.

A portrait dated between the years 1565 and 1570 shows Elizabeth wearing a ruff formed of small circular quillings of silver guipure (decorative lace), closely set around her throat and held by a rich carcanet or collar of rubies, amethysts, and pearls, set in a beautiful gold filigree with large pear-shaped pearls, hanging from each lozenge. The bodice of the dress, which is of rich white brocade, is embroidered in diagonal stripes with bullion in a running pattern of hops and hop-leaves. It fastens down the front and fits close to the body with a point as a dress of more recent date. It was ornamented between the embroidery with gems in gold filigree of the same patterns as the carcanet. The bodice is slashed with purple velvet edged with bullion. The shape of the sleeves has been called "gigot." They are surmounted on the shoulder with puffs of gold gauze separated with rubies and amethysts, and two small rouleaux (rolls) wreathed with pearls and bullion. The sleeves are slashed with velvet, embroidered with bullion, decorated with gems to match the bodice, and finished at the wrists with quilled ruffles of the same pattern as her ruff. She wears the jewel and ribbon of the order of the Garter about her throat. The george (a jewel showing a figure of St. George) is a large oval medallion hanging from a pale-blue ribbon, decorated with rubies and amethysts of the same lozenge form and setting as those in her carcanet. Around her waist she wears a jewelled girdle to match. The skirt of her dress is faced with three stripes of miniver. Her head-dress is very elegant, consisting of a

coronal of gems and gold-work placed on crimson velvet, surmounted with a transparent wreath of laurel leaves, and stiffened with gold wire. Very beautiful lappets hang from this wreath. They are formed of pipes of gold gauze, arranged in latticed puffs, edged with vandyked guipure of bullion, and fastened at every crossing with a large round pearl. A white rose holds one of the lappets on the right temple. She holds a white rose in one hand. Her hands are ungloved and very delicate looking. Her gloves were always of thick white kid, very richly embroidered with bullion, pearls, and colored silks on the backs. They were fringed with gold, slashed with colored satin at the elbows and stiffened with gimp. In the palm, five air-holes a little larger than melon seeds were stamped to prevent any ill effects from perspiration.

The costume of the portrait of Elizabeth in the Cecil collection showed her wearing a lofty headdress with a heron-plume and two ruffs. One was the close-quilled ruff around her throat, and a high, radiated ruff, somewhat in the Spanish style, attached to her regal mantle. The mantle is thrown back on her shoulders, and becomes gradually more narrow as it approaches her waist. Behind this rises a pair of wings like a third ruff. Her robe is covered with eyes and ears to signify her omniscient qualities and her power of intelligence. To complete the whole, a serpent, indicative of her wisdom, is coiled up on her sleeve.

Elizabeth died when she was seventy years old, a great age for her era. She was queen forty-four years. She died on March 24, 1603. She was most royally buried in Westminster Abbey on April 28, 1603. At this time the city of Westminster was filled with all sorts of people who were in the streets, houses, windows, and on the roofs to see the funeral. When they beheld her statue of effigy, lying on the coffin, dressed in royal robes, having a crown upon her head, and a ball and scepter in either hand, there was such a general sighing, groaning, and weeping as has not been seen or known in the memory of man. No history makes mention of any people, time, or state, making like lamentations over the death of their sovereign.

Glancing back over history we find that queens like more common women have emotions, whims, and personality quirks running from the sublime to the ridiculous. Some had great beauty and were "down-right" mean. Some made up for lack of personal beauty by being both warm hearted and charitable. All seem to have had one thing in common. After becoming queen they all dressed expensively and lavishly. As queen they all expressed, not their individual personality and taste in dress, but the times in which they lived and the environments from which they came. Queens after all are just women.

INDEX TO VOLUME XXIX

October, 1957, to May, 1958

	Mo.	Pg.
"Action: Camera"	Mar.	12
Allan, Alfred K.: "Joseph Schildkraut: An Actor's Devotion"	Dec.	7
Allan, Alfred K.: "World's Favorite Religious Film, The"	Apr.	11
"Aldisert, Helen Harding" (Thespian of the Month)	Oct.	10
"All Teachers Are Thespians"	Feb.	14
"As I See It"		
Oct. 4, Nov. 6, Dec. 5, Jan. 8, Feb. 10, Mar. 6, Apr. 7,	May	6
"Backstage Hazards"	Dec.	8
"Before the Play"	May	26
Best Thespian Honor Roll 1956-57	Nov.	7
Blank, Earl W.: "Plays of the Month" (Dept.) q. v.		
Brief Views (Book Review Dept.) Each issue—last page		
Clark, Mort: "Our European Tour"	Apr.	31
Coger, Leslie Irene: "Oral Interpretation" (Series) q. v.		
Costumes Worn by Royalty (Series)		
"From Matilda of Flanders to Eleanora of Aquitaine"	Oct.	14
"From Berengaria of Navarre to Anne of Bohemia"	Nov.	11
"From Isabella of Valois to Margaret of Anjou"	Dec.	10
"From Elizabeth Woodville to Katharine of Aragon"	Jan.	13
"From Katharine of Aragon to Anne Boleyn"	Feb.	18
"From Jane Seymour to Anne of Cleves"	Mar.	14
"From Katharine Howard to Mary Tudor"	Apr.	18
"Great Elizabeth, The"	May	19
Day, Linda: "Ode to a Play Director"	Jan.	21
Deschamps, Jeanne: "Before the Play"	May	26
"Do It Yourself"	Mar.	11
Dusenbury, Delwin B.: "History of the American Musical Theater" (Series) q. v.		
Edwards, Dr. William B.: "Superintendent Speaks, A"	Dec.	6
Fashions for On and Off Stage (Dept.)		
Oct. 15, Dec. 20, Jan. 23, Feb. 24, Mar. 24, Apr. 24		
Fenske, Lynn: "Ode to a Play Director"	Jan.	21
Friederich, Willard: "Brief Views" (Book Review Dept.) q. v.		
Hallcock, Margaretta: "Backstage Hazards"	Dec.	8
Hannah, Jack: "Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana"	Feb.	12
History of the American Musical Theater (Series)		
"The Beginning: From 'Black Face' to 'The Black Crook'"	Oct.	12
"Gay Galaxy of Stars, A"	Nov.	9
"Influence of Gilbert and Sullivan, The"	Dec.	9
"The Operetta: Vienna to Victor Herbert"	Jan.	12
"Variety and Vaudeville"	Feb.	15
"Review of Revues, A"	Mar.	18
"American Musical Comedy: 1900-1920"	Apr.	19
"American Musical Theater: Production Problems"	May	21
Index to Volume XXIX, 1957-58	May	31
"In This Issue"		
Oct. 6, Nov. 4, Dec. 4, Jan. 6, Feb. 8, Mar. 8, Apr. 10,	May	7
Jernigan, Hubert A.: "Thespian Initiation 'Live' on WLW-A TV"	Mar.	25
"Joseph Schildkraut: An Actor's Devotion"	Dec.	7
"Last Performance"	Jan.	24
"Let's Have a Theater Party"	Jan.	10
Liebert, Burt: "Let's Have a Theater Party"	Jan.	10
Lollin, Eugene: "Last Performance"	Jan.	24
Miller, Margaretta S.: "All Teachers Are Thespians"	Feb.	14
"Ode to a Play Director"	Jan.	21
Oral Interpretation (Series)		
"So You Want to Read Aloud!"	Oct.	11
"Let's Tell a Story"	Nov.	10

	Mo.	Pg.
"So You Want to Read a Play"	Dec.	11
"Let's Give a Book Review"	Jan.	11
"So You Want to Make Them Laugh"	Feb.	19
"Let's Act Poetry"	Mar.	15
"Let's Give a Reading Recital"	Apr.	15
"Let's Have a Readers' Theater"	May	20
"Our European Tour"	Apr.	31
Phillips, Robert J.: "Action: Camera!"	Mar.	12
Pictorial Preview: Seventh National Dramatic Arts Conference	May	8
Plays of the Month (Series)		
Annie Get Your Gun	Apr.	22
Barretts of Wimpole Street, The	Dec.	14
Belles on Their Toes	Dec.	15
Berkeley Square	Dec.	15
Bernardine	Oct.	20
Blithe Spirit	Oct.	20
Clementine	Oct.	21
Comedy of Errors, A	Nov.	14
Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, A	Mar.	22
Crucible, The	Jan.	18
Curious Savage, The	Oct.	20
Dino	Feb.	22
Divine Flora, The	Dec.	14
Don't Tell Your Father	Nov.	14
Enchanted Cottage, The	May	26
Girl Crazy	Apr.	23
Great Big Doorstep, The	May	24
Headin' for the Hills	Mar.	22
Hobgoblin House	Mar.	23
Hoosier Schoolmaster, The	Feb.	23
Icebound	Jan.	18
Ladies' Lounge	Apr.	22
Little Dog Laughed, The	Feb.	23
Little Foxes, The	Feb.	22
Love Is Eternal	Jan.	18
Night of January 16th, The	Mar.	22
Playboy of the Western World	May	24
Rainmaker, The	Nov.	15
Rivals, The	Apr.	22
Seven Sisters	Jan.	19
Taming of the Shrew	Nov.	14
Willow and I, The	May	24
Poston, Don H.: "Selecting the High School Play"	Oct.	8
"Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana"	Feb.	12
"Purdue University Theater"	Apr.	12
Reed, Frieda E.: "Theater for Children" (Dept.) q. v.		
Regional Conferences		
Oct. 22, Nov. 24, Dec. 23, Jan. 25, Feb. 25, Mar. 8, Apr. 10,	May	6
Roberts, Lloyd E.: "Do It Yourself"	Mar.	11
"Sands, Tommy" (Thespian of the Month)	Mar.	10
"Selecting the High School Play"	Oct.	8
Shannon, Anne: "Try a 'Resident Playwright'"	May	18
Shields, Barbara M.: "What Is Your Goal in High School Theater?"	Apr.	14
Smith, Ross D.: "Purdue University Theater"	Apr.	12
"Stafford, Iris" (Thespian of the Month)	Nov.	8
Stevens, Doris: "Try Shakespeare"	Mar.	13
"Superintendent Speaks, A"	Dec.	6
Theater for Children (Dept.)		
Oct. 18, Nov. 12, Dec. 12, Jan. 14, Feb. 20, Mar. 20, Apr. 20,	May	22
Thespian Chatter		
Oct. 22, Dec. 18, Jan. 20, Feb. 25,	Mar.	25
"Thespian of the Month"		
Oct. 10, Nov. 8, Feb. 11,	Mar.	10
"Thespian Initiation 'Live' on WLW-A TV"	Mar.	25
Thespian Scoreboard	Nov.	23
"Tinsley, Byron Ra" (Thespian of the Month)	Feb.	11
Trumbo, Charles R. and Pollyann: "Costumes Worn by Royalty" (Series) q. v.	Mar.	13
"Try a 'Resident Playwright'"	May	18
"Try Shakespeare"		
"What Is Your Goal in High School Theater?"	Apr.	14
"Winners, The"	Nov.	2
"World's Favorite Religious Film, The"	Apr.	11

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PLAYWRIGHT

(Continued from page 18)

When the excitement dies away, however, dramatic interest still remains. Usually a school play is soon forgotten except for the autographed programs and the nostalgic reminiscences. Not so at Highland. The workshop continues as Erhard discusses the performances with teachers, students, and parents. Cast members offer the greatest help, for in retrospect they can see the play more clearly and often offer valuable suggestions. Out of these post mortems come the final revision and eventual submission to a publisher. Thus the original script provides a full year's study of the theater.

Erhard's writing philosophy, still crystallizing, blends well with our theatrical plans. He began in a rather broad comic vein but soon became convinced that important and serious teen-age problems can be probed in school comedy. *The High White Star* had more than its share of laughs, especially in the irrepressible character of the school newspaper enthusiast. But the theme is far more serious—cheating in school. Erhard drew upon his own teaching experiences and observations to show how honesty treated too lightly in today's high schools can bring serious consequences. His latest script, now in the revision stages, deals with the problems of high school marriage. As Erhard puts it, "School life is full of problems, important to both students and adults, that are worth illuminating on stage. Without preaching, there is still a great deal to say in this type of play."

So we feel we're getting technically a "school comedy," although it actually transcends the typical play. It's thoughtful drama—aimed at today's teen-agers. We feel this is one of the best "school plays" possible, and thus the "resident playwright" helps make dramatics much talked about in a school without even a stage.

We do, however, have one dark cloud on the horizon. Two neighboring high schools are both eager for Erhard's next play; yet we'd like to experience for ourselves again that greatest stage thrill—the world premiere.

THE PAST year has produced many anthologies. In general they may be divided into two groups: I) those which contain standard versions of the classics and which are primarily useful as additions to the drama library (but, to the ambitious, as possible production scripts also!); and II) those which contain new plays or new adaptations of well-known classics intended primarily for classroom or public production.

I. The first group need not be discussed in detail, for anyone interested in the theater will know about the plays they contain. To provide latest information on their availability, however, they are briefly listed:

FORD, edited by Havelock Ellis. Mermaid Dramabooks, Hill and Wang, 1957; 426 pp.

Five plays by John Ford, with an introduction by Ellis, including: *The Lover's Melancholy*, *'Tis Pity She's A Whore*, *The Broken Heart*, *Love's Sacrifice*, and *Perkin Warbeck*.

SHERIDAN, edited by Louis Kronenberger. Mermaid Dramabook, 1957; 359 pp.

Sheridan's six great plays: *The Rivals*, *St. Patrick's Day*, *The Duenna*, *A Trip to Scarborough*, *The School for Scandal*, *The Critic*.

SIX PLAYS BY HENRIK IBSEN, translated by Eva Le Gallienne. Modern Library, 1957; 510 pp.

Miss Le Gallienne has long been noted as a translator of Ibsen, as well as one of America's great actresses. In this volume a few of her previous works are added to later ones, providing a superb collection of smooth-flowing, natural-sounding modern translations of what are still some of the great products of the modern realistic theater: *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Rosmersholm*, *Hedda Gabler*, and *The Master Builder*. It is almost safe to say that, until one has read these translations, he has probably not really known Ibsen, whose passion and force have so often been weakened by stilted literal translations that make him sound pedantic and old-fashioned.

MASTERPIECES OF THE DRAMA, edited by Alexander W. Allison, Arthur J. Carr, and Arthur M. Eastman. Macmillan, 1957; 693 pp.

Eleven great milestones in world drama are presented in a comparatively inexpensive (but extremely readable format) paper-backed volume, with brief introductions: *Oedipus*, *Alcestis*, *Volpone*, *The Miser*, *The Rivals*, *Hedda Gabler*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Riders to the Sea*, *Junio and the Paycock*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, and *The Madwoman of Chaillot*. Translations are all standard ones, although, except for the more recent plays, several are chosen from the translations of some years ago instead of the latest ones.

THE CHESTER MYSTERY PLAYS, edited by Maurice Hussey. Theatre Arts Books, 1957; 160 pp.

Sixteen of the Chester Cycle of medieval religious plays have been adapted into remarkably readable vernacular English. The incidents selected range from "The Fall of Lucifer" to "The Last Judgment." There is also an excellent introduction to the mystery religious plays. Any teacher will welcome this teachable book—and some groups should likewise find these scripts most satisfactory for production on the various religious holidays that they commemorate.

EIGHT PLAYS BY MOLIÈRE, translated by Morris Bishop. Modern Library, 1957; 399 pp.

Prof. Bishop of Cornell University has provided wonderfully fluent translations of some of Molière's better-known plays: *The Precious Damsels*, *The School for Wives*, *The Critique*

BRIEF VIEWS

By WILLARD FRIEDERICH

of the School for Wives, *The Versailles Impromptu*, *Tartuffe*, *The Misanthrope*, *The Physician in Spite of Himself*, and *The Would-Be Gentleman*. Both his detailed introduction and these conversational versions indicate the author's well-founded belief that Molière "created the popular comedy as we know it today." Some may prefer older and more rhythmical translations, such as those by Curtis Hidden Page, for example; but probably many more will prefer these easy modern adaptations, especially if they wish to produce them with amateur actors to whom the intricacies of literature are somewhat of a mystery. This reviewer can heartily attest to the extreme playability of a Bishop translation, as his production of another play, *The Would-Be Invalid*, proved. Certainly directors should read these plays and consider their selection as part of a solid production schedule for an educational theater.

THEATRE '56, edited by John Chapman. Random House, 1956; 501 pp.

The yearly volume of Chapman's choice of the "Golden Dozen" of best plays of the Broadway season, together with provocative introductory summaries of the season as a whole and many valuable indices and lists of theater names, records, casts, and general information. The plays chosen for this period were *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Lark*, *Tiger at the Gates*, *The Chalk Garden*, *No Time for Sergeants*, *A Hatful of Rain*, *Time Limit!*, *The Ponder Heart*, *Mister Johnson*, *The Matchmaker*, *A View from the Bridge*, and *The Most Happy Fella*—on the whole a rather solid list of good modern dramas. As always, most of each play is presented in synopsis form with only the high-light scenes being reproduced in actual dialogue.

II. The following anthologies are made up of plays written for production by

THE COMMUNITY THEATRE AND HOW IT WORKS by John Wray Young. Harpers, 1957; 166 pp.

For over twenty years Mr. Young and his wife have worked as director and technical director for the Shreveport Little Theater. This book is a summary of what they have learned and proved in their successful operation of a model community theater project. Much of the book is devoted to an analysis of the purpose, function, and future of the community theater. In between such generalized discussions, however, are scattered sound bits of advice on such practical matters as organizing a theater group, obtaining and running a place for presenting plays, recognizing and using the strengths of the amateur actor and production, utilizing community talents and interest, financing civic theaters, and so on. These opinions will be of great interest to anyone involved in theater; but even more significant will be discussions of such problems as play selection, casting, rehearsal schedules and procedures, building an audience, advertising and ticket sales, working within a community's tastes, attitudes, and experiences—all of which frequently apply to theaters of any kind in any place, especially the educational theater. The high school director therefore will find in this book many useful suggestions; for, in most ways, the high school theater is also a community theater—the only one most communities have.

young amateurs at the high-school or, in some cases, the junior-high level.

PRIZE PLAYS FOR TEEN-AGERS by Helen Louise Miller. Plays, Inc., 1956; 504 pp.

Twenty-four one-acts, most of them rather elementary, aimed at high-lighting such special events as Book Week, Veteran's Day, Educational Week; the religious holidays; and the special days, such as Mother's Day and Lincoln's birthday. All are royalty-free, have simple settings that can be handled even in the classroom, and do not call for any special acting ability. Dialogue is a bit forced at times; but, on the whole, usually easy and fluent and apropos for the characters and incidents involved.

GREAT CHRISTIAN PLAYS, edited by Theodore M. Switz and Robert A. Johnston. Seabury Press, 1956; 306 pp.

This is one of the most fascinating books on religious drama to come out in many decades. It contains five good medieval religious plays in acting versions; that is, they are adapted in fluent modern English; excellent costume sketches are plentiful; production notes and suggestions for directors of religious productions are brief but valuable. More important, original mood music, composed by Thomas Matthews of St. Luke's Church in Evanston, is included—all clearly worked into the scripts at specific intervals and composed to produce the particular effect needed at that precise moment. Particularly useful scripts are *Everyman* and John Gassner's adaptation of *Abraham and Isaac*.

These things alone make the book a most unusual one; but even more has been added: four poetic dramatic readings, suitable for church or radio, that characterize four of the apostles; well-arranged choral choir readings, including excerpts from *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas A. Kempis, *God Speaks* by Charles Péguy, and antiphonal readings from the Gospel of St. John. Rarely has the worker in religious drama been offered such a stimulating, helpful, and unusual work book.

DRAMATICS THE YEAR ROUND, edited by Samuel J. Citron. United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education, 1956; 543 pp.

This is another unusual book, assembled to fill the need for "plays, operettas and dramatic ceremonial services of Jewish content for schools, community centers, and summer camps." The first fifty pages are devoted to giving minimum suggestions on acting, directing, and technical production for untrained workers. The rest of the book is primarily devoted to plays, ranging from three to forty-five minutes playing time, that commemorate the holy days of Judaism and also the special days of America: Columbus Day, Thanksgiving, Independence Day, and so on. The scripts vary from simple dramatizations of anecdotes, folk tales and legends to short plays and operettas in several scenes and acts. There are also some arrangements for choral reading and several outlines for services for special holidays. Whenever music is required, the scores and words are included—along with directions and illustrations for any other necessary special effects. Historical and modern periods, real and fictitious stories, serious and humorous themes are all included. The editor grades the materials according to the age-level of the audience for which the scripts will be most meaningful; but in many cases audiences of older years, even adults could enjoy them. This age-spread also pertains to the actors: most of the dialogue is definitely not infantile, even though designed for youngsters, and therefore older actors could easily act many of these plays at their own level.

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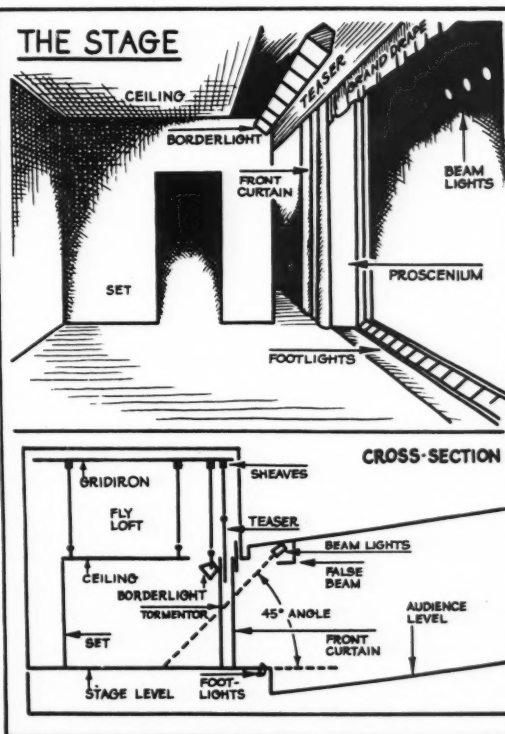
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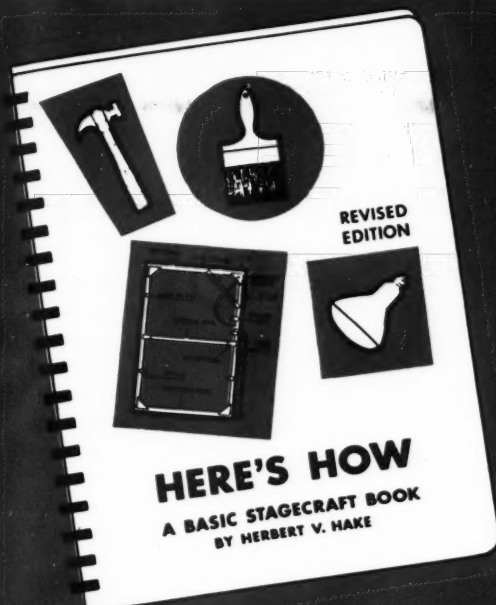
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STORY Three young girls in search of a man, but not just any man, tired of life on an Iowa chicken farm, Elizabeth, Moira, and Pam, know that a girl is likely to marry someone she knows, and they only know farmers and chickens. They sell their farm and put all of their money into one big visit to one of the most expensive vacation resorts. One of the three will be the rich and desirable Miss Mason; the other two sisters will pretend to be her personal maid and secretary-companion. Poor Henry, their lawyer, who is interested in Elizabeth, follows them and tries desperately to talk them out of their plan. With all of their money invested in an expensive wardrobe and an expensive hotel suite, it's beginning to look as if their plan will pay off, for Pam is rapidly falling in love with the popular young man-about-town she meets at the hotel, and he with her. She's sure he's rich as he has no visible means of support, and he spends all of his time in the hotel being nice to the guests. Just when she is hopelessly in love with him, however, she discovers to her horror that he is not a guest at the hotel but the social and recreation director, or as she describes it—"a gigolo who spreads himself quite thinly." Albert, hurt by the rejection and angry at Pam's interest in money, sets out to maneuver her into the arms of the most attractive available rich young man, Stephen Harrington. This is tough on the younger sister, Moira, who is pretending to be the maid and has fallen desperately in love with Stephen. As a result of Albert's efforts, Pam and Stephen get engaged. Nobody is happy, including Stephen's aunt and uncle, who are justly suspicious of the whole arrangement. By this time, Elizabeth, who is playing the part of the secretary-companion, is about convinced that she would rather have Henry, the

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"And after you've caught a man, maybe he'll have a friend—and maybe he'll have a friend!"

nice, steady lawyer. Pam, however, is so furious with Albert that she never wishes to see him again, and poor Moira is trying to play the part of a helpful maid, even though she has lost her desire to help anyone. The three sisters manage to untangle their mixed-up affairs, but they get more help than they wish and have to make some pretty embarrassing explanations.

Characters Pam, Elizabeth, and Moira, the "three blind mice"; Henry, Albert, and Stephen, three nice young men whose only mistakes were to be interested in the wrong sister; Mrs. Bramber and Conrad, the mixed-up aunt and uncle, who are trying to offer real guidance to their rich and parentless nephew, who seems to need it all too often; the poor hotel manager, who wants to keep everyone happy, the waitress, and the lovely Edna Parker.

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